



MATWATCH

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OCT. 21-27

THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

"BATTLE BOWL" SKEDDED FOR STARRCADE

ATLANTA---Experimenting with yet another new format, World Championship Wrestling is said to be planning an event termed "Battle Bowl" for the Dec. 29 STARRCADE.

The show, scheduled for Norfolk VA, will include 20 tag teams squaring off in ten matches. Insiders say after the tag scramble, the ten winning teams will converge for a battle royal (a la BUNKHOUSE STAMPEDE).

Not specified as of yet is whether WCW champion Lex Luger will defend his belt or be part of the tag tourney.

COURT DATE SET OVER "REAL" WORLD TITLE

ATLANTA---A Nov. 7 court date has been set for a hearing over ownership of Ric Flair's former NWA and current "real" world heavy-weight title belt.

Parties for World Championship Wrestling, Inc., were denied a temporary injunction to ban Flair and the World Wrestling Federation from continuing to use the \$24,000 belt in its television shows.

National Wrestling Alliance president Jim Herd and a group of promoters in the old NWA consortium contend the belt is property of the NWA. Turner Broadcasting System officials say the belt became TBS property when the company purchased Jim Crockett Promotions. Flair's representatives say he was given the belt when Crockett could not make payments on it during his 1988 bankruptcy.

WCW ended the belt out of its WCW MAIN EVENT opening last week.

SID, KERRY CONTINUE TO MISS DATES

STAMFORD CT---Hulk Hogan heir apparent Sid Justice and former WWF Intercontinental champion Kerry Von Erich officially are both
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The Responses

EDDIE'S TARGETS SPEAK; WILL PAUL BE HEARD?

Eddie Gilbert knows how to blow a fuse and ignite one in others. His Oct. 13 blasting of top executives in World Championship Wrestling and the USWA has drawn a limited response from both organizations.

In a surprise phone call to John Arezzi's PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT program, Gilbert castigated WCW's Jim Herd for suspending Paul E. Dangerously (Paul Heyman) Oct. 7 for an alleged leak of information which led to the cancellation of a joint WCW-USWA taping Nov. 11 in Memphis. Gilbert further called on WCW president Jack Petrik to dump Herd and blamed USWA owner Jerry Jarrett and champion Jerry Lawler for influencing the Dangerously suspension (see last week's MATWATCH). In addition, Gilbert called for an internal investigation into WCW commentator Jim Ross's role in the situation.

In a rare comment to a wrestling newsletter, Jarrett responded first: "You're the first (bulletin editor) I've ever talked to on-the-record. I have read the transcript of the comments Eddie Gilbert made on the radio program. They're his opinion and he's entitled to them. I don't agree with any of it. I don't know why he would go on a radio program and say these things."

Jarrett continued: "There were various private telephone conversations between myself and people from World Championship Wrestling and it would be inappropriate for me to discuss any of those. But Eddie Gilbert's accounts of the facts in this matter are inaccurate. In fact, there is great disparity between his radio interview and reality." Jarrett would not specify which comments were inaccurate. MATWATCH was not successful in reaching Lawler.

Ross, contacted in his WCW office Monday, told us he would like to answer some of Gilbert's remarks (Ross was accused of sacrificing Dangerously after Ross speculated on a possible Lawler-Lex Luger match on his Oct. 5 Wrestling Hotline report) but cannot publicly comment without the okay of WCW executive vice president Jim Herd. Herd did not return our call before leaving on a week-long vacation last Monday.

WCW president Jack Petrik, out of the U.S. when Dangerously was suspended, briefly responded Wednesday: "I missed Jim (Herd) before he left town Monday. So, I haven't had a chance to discuss this with him and I can't comment on any of this. I have read the (Gilbert radio comments) but I can't respond to that. But I will look into it when Jim gets back and I will tell you what I can when I do."

Nothing has developed in the past week to support speculation and caller demands on several wrestling/talk radio shows (and an attempt last week on the Prodigy and CompuServ wrestling bulletin boards for an organized "dump Herd" letter-writing campaign to TBS) that WCW is taking seriously Gilbert's call for
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Steve

Beverly

STEVE BEVERLY

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Herd's ouster. Dangerously's attorney, Bruce Gold, sent a letter to WCW last week to discuss potential legal options in the case. If WCW does not respond by midweek, New York reporters say Gold may okay a Dangerously media briefing.

COMMENTARY

Clearly, this is one of the most troubling questions in the rocky three-year ownership of WCW. Regardless of the overwhelming emotional tide against Herd, three key questions should be answered and answered soon:

(1) DID DANGEROUSLY WILLFULLY LEAK CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE WCW-USWA TAPING? If all Dangerously knew was a date, anyone could have deduced the possibilities. Sources close to this situation reiterated to us this week Dangerously could not have known specifics.

(2) DID HERD HAVE SPECIFIC DOCUMENTED CASES OF PAST DANGEROUSLY INFRACTIONS AND WAS PAUL GIVEN A CHANCE TO DEFEND HIMSELF? The first we have no answer for but the latter, you can judge for yourself. If the answer to the former is no, WCW's liability becomes a major issue.

(3) WILL DANGEROUSLY BE GIVEN A HEARING, OR "REVIEW?" Again, we have no answer but if Gold's statement of last week is true, there should be one.

Again, the overall issue should be one where fairness overrules personal animosities. Regardless of who is ultimately proven right, the overriding question is---was the issue worth becoming what has exploded out of proportion to what, in my view, it should have, involving so many peripheral parties? Only Jim Herd can answer that.

MATWATCH: THE FINAL CHAPTER

The 100-page final annual will be published between Feb. 15-28. Price: \$13.00 (U.S./CANADA), \$21.00 (OVERSEAS). CHECK, CASH or MONEY ORDER to: MATWATCH, 16 ROBIN HOOD LANE, JACKSON TN 38305.

CORNETTE: TOUR DE FORCE

He may have been out of a "big two" promotion for more than a year but the lip is still aerobically sound. Jim Cornette has sounded off about everything from Jim Herd to the WWF to his early years in pro wrestling on Cable Radio Network's WRESTLING TALK.

Guesting on the satellite program with co-hosts Dangerous D and Dan Farren, Cornette wasted no time sizing the Ric Flair-Hulk Hogan series. "Of course, I'm with Flair because he's a hometown boy (Charlotte) and a good friend of mine," said Cornette. "But he has to be doing better now because the stress factor and the aggravation factor in WCW is huge, I can tell you from personal experience. Once you get out of there, it's almost like being paroled from prison."

Cornette was hardly tongue-in-cheek when it came to his view of his former employers at WCW. "They may still be on life support but I think somebody's getting ready to pull the plug," said Cornette. "They (TBS) don't have any respect for the wrestlers or the fans. They didn't know how to run a wrestling promotion, so they looked at the most successful promotion, the WWF, and said, 'Okay, we'll copy them.' Well, I can trace but they can't even copy right."

As for Lex Luger as Flair's WCW successor, Cornette said: "Lex Luger has come a long way. But who was it who in the vice presidential debate told Dan Quayle, 'You're no Jack Kennedy.' Well, Lex Luger is no Ric Flair, by a longshot."

One caller asked Cornette why he didn't take the Midnight Express to the WWF when he left WCW last Oct. 30. "I never really had a desire to go to the WWF," said Cornette. "You can't knock what they do because they make a lot of money but the problem is I don't think the WWF is where the kind of wrestling I got interested in is. It's not what I want to do. With whatever's left of my wrestling career, it's a little too showbiz, a little too glitzy and not enough wrestling involved, though Ric Flair may change that." When the young caller responded that the WWF is "a cartoon," Cornette answered: "Even a 12-year-old kid is saying the WWF is a cartoon. What does that say about the state of professional wrestling in America?"

Reminiscing about one of his past proteges, Cornette criticized WCW's cloning the Big Bubba Rogers character of the mid-1980s with Mr. (Curtis) Hughes. "Mr. Hughes is a blatant, outright Big Bubba Rogers imitation, down to the carnation in his left lapel," said Cornette. "It's like a band calling itself The Rolling Stones and having a lead singer with big lips."

Asked of the chances of The Ultimate Warrior (Jim Hellwig) coming to WCW, Cornette said: "I think a wrestler of The Ultimate Warrior's calibre can put the final nail in the coffin for the (WWF's) competition....as for the Ultimate Warrior retiring from wrestling, I wondered where he'd ever wrestled yet."

Cornette told callers he developed his own managerial style but was influenced by Sam Bass, Sir Clements, Dr. Ken Ramey, Gentleman Saul Weingeroff and Jimmy Hart as he grew up watching.

Told the Midnight Express turn on the Dynamic "Duds" was popular with listeners, Cornette said: "The only person who never liked anything we did with the Dudes was Jim Herd. We knew we were on to something then because anything he didn't like, we knew was going to catch on with the public."

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still on the disabled list.

Justice, said to be suffering from a bicep injury which some estimate could keep him out as long as eight months, missed all WWF weekend cards and the company faced a dilemma for this week's TV tapings as to whether Justice would be included.

Von Erich, hospitalized Oct. 10 at Baylor University Hospital in Texas for undisclosed causes, is still out of action. The nature of his illness remains unconfirmed.

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VIDIOTS

Oct. 14-20

(GLOBAL/ESPN) - Repeats all week as United Parcel Service lost four tapes, including two made-for-ESPN new episodes. NO RATING.

(GLOBAL/SYN) - [MAJOR LEAGUE]: {REPLAY/GLOBAL TV TITLE PLAYOFF} Patriot d. Al Perez to win belt when Eddie Gilbert's help goes awry. Perez then decks Gilbert; Soultaker d. Avenger; (REPLAY) Scott Anthony (in drag as Thelma Harper) ambushes Handsome Stranger; Anthony d. Rick Garren; (NEWSROOM) Joe Pedicino questions WWF decision on Randy Savage & GWF commish Max Andrews' non-suspension of Anthony; John Tatum d. Rattlesnake Raitz; Chris Walker/Steve Simpson d. Black Bart/Tug Taylor. Bart & Tug split after; Jeff Gaylord d. Sweet Daddy Falcone. DRAW.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: Ricky Steamboat d. Warlord by DQ when Slick pushes Ricky off top rope. Ricky dropkicks Warlord out & Slick flees; (UPDATE) Hogan-Undertaker as SURVIVOR SERIES topper; Berzerker d. Bill Pierce; (CLIPS) Hulk Hogan in "Suburban Commando;" Beverly Bros. d. Phil Apollo/Ross Greenberg; Legion of Doom d. Mike Fury/Brian Donahue; Jim Duggan d. Bob Bradley; (GUESTS) Natural Disasters/Jimmy Hart; (FEATURE) Tito Santana w. Mexican people; (GUEST) Randy Savage; Undertaker d. Greg Valentine; (ANGLE) Sean Mooney passes out; Steve Keirn double countout vs. Jim Neidhart; (BARBER SHOP) Brutus Beefcake w. Roddy Piper on Ric Flair; Nasty Boys d. Kerry Davis/Bob Wiseman; (GUESTS) Big Bully Busick/Bruno Wippleman, who knock off Jamieson's glasses & stomp on them; (FEATURE) Sgt. Slaughter at Lincoln Memorial; Davey Boy Smith d. Brooklyn Brawler; (FINALE) Savage tosses Busick out of studio by his nose. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(SUNCOAST PRO) - [SUNCOAST PRO TAG SEMIFINALS]: Giant Outlaw/Big Charlie Fields d. Ian Weston/Kenny Kendall; (SEG) Henry Raines takes poll of fans, who vote for Penelope Paradise to be locked in cage; Jim Cooper d. Rick Thames; (DEMO) Japanese-style wrestling by Jerry Flynn/Charlie Anderson. Superstar mocks them; Flynn d. Superstar by countout; (ANGLE) Debbie (Drake) Malenko puts Paradise in full nelson, paddles her into cage. Cooper comes out & feeds her candy. NO RATING.

(WINDY CITY) - {WCW "WORLD" HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE} Ron Powers d. Frank Nelson by countout to retain belt; (WCW "WORLD" LIGHTWEIGHT TITLE) Mike Anthony d. Shogun Assassin to retain belt. BOMB-PLUS.

(UWF CLASSICS) - [2/91]: Steve Ray d. The Beast; Cactus Jack/Bob Orton Jr. d. Mike Anera/Tom Brandi; (CAPT. LOU'S CORNER) Lou/Bruno Sammartino unveil UWF Sportschannel TV belt; S.D. Jones d. Capt. Bad; (CAGE) Paul Orndorff d. Steve Williams via DQ when Terry Gordy/Cactus attack Orndorff as he is at edge of cage for escape; Other winner: Sonny Beach. DOUBLE BOMB.

(SOUTH ATLANTIC) - Chris Chavis/Wahoo McDaniel d. Tommy Royal/Badd Dogg; (WWC) Invader I d. Manny Fernandez by DQ; (WWC) Ricky Santana/Ray Gonzales d. Alex Porteau/Blue Angel; (REPLAYS) 1. Nazi Stormtroopers d. Brad & Brent Holliday. 2. Jackie Fulton d. Tommy Landell; (WWC) Hugo Savinovich w. Invader/Santana/Gonzales/Fernandez. Carlos Colon says he'll defend Universal belt in SAPW. RESTHOLD.

(LUCHA LIBRE) - Ponzona/El Espectro Jr./El Espectro de Ultratumba draw vs. Ciclon Ramirez/La Aguila Solitaria/El Pantera II; (NOTILUCHA) Pierroth Jr. challenges La Mascara Sagrada to mask vs. mask; (REPLAY) Brick Casas/El Arcangel de la Muerte d. Talisman Jr./El Guerrero Samurai II 2-3; El Apollo Torres/El Rebelde d. El Solitario/Marco Tulio 2-3; Fuerza Guerrera/Jaque Mate/El Supremo I d. Apolo Dantes/Cesar Dantes/Eddy Guerrero 2-3. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WCW/SYN) - [WCW PRO]: P.N. News d. John Faulkner; (WNN) Gordon Solie on Bill Kazmaier-Lex Luger & Kaz bearhugging Abdullah the Butcher, Paul E. Dangerously/Missy Hyatt search

for Chamber of Horrors in Dallas. Paul E. bashes thug in head w. phone; Barry Windham/Dustin Rhodes d. Zan Panzer/Mike Fever;

(From WCW) Enforcers d. Screaming Eagles when Arn bashes Michael P.S. Eagle in head w. belt; Enforcers d. Jesse French/Scott Sandlin; Brian Pillman d. Terrence Taylor when after Brian bopped by Thomas Rich w. laptop, Big Josh stops count on 2 to tell ref, Josh decks ref & Brian schoolboys Taylor; (SEG) Paul E. talks to Galoob Z-Man; Kazmaier d. Cactus Jack by DQ when Abdullah runs in w. kendo stick but Kaz doesn't sell. Abby bashes 4 jobbers w. stick, then Kaz bearhugs Abby; Curtis Hughes d. Joey Maggs. RESTHOLD. [WORLD WIDE]: Kazmaier d. Mike Thor; Johnny B. Badd d. Sandlin; (WNN) Same as PRO; (REPLAY) Luger attacks Rhodes; Hughes d. Rhodes by countout; Big Josh d. Rich when Thomas collides w. Taylor; Other winners: Cactus/Abby. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Enforcers d. Young Pistols; Greg Sawyer d. Steve Austin by DQ when Z-Ref reverses decision after Austin tosses Greg out following pin; Badd d. Kenny Kendall; (HALLOWEEN HAVOC CONTROL CENTER) Solie w. Paul E./Missy in Dallas; Rhodes d. Tony Mello; (MISSY DOES MAIL) Freebirds-Enforcers saga; (REPLAY) Pillman-York Foundation series; Pillman d. Rich. RESTHOLD.

[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: Sting d. Doug Sommers; (REPLAY) Cactus/Abby sing "Happy Birthday" to Sting. Sting answers them; Medusa Miceli d. Lelani Kai; (REPLAY) Enforcers-Screaming Eagles from last week; Michael Hayes d. Larry Zbyszko; (6-MAN) Big Josh/Bobby Eaton/Mike Graham d. Taylor/Rich/Richard Morton when, after Rich pins Graham, Pillman enters & tells ref, who restarts match & Eaton d. Rich; (WCW TV TITLE) P.N.N. d. Austin on reversal when, after Austin scores pin w. knucks from Jeannie, Medusa runs in & pulls knucks out of Jeannie's dress; (MUSIC VIDEO) Van Hammer; (INTERVIEW) Jim Ross announces Hughes banned from ringside at Luger-Simmons HALLOWEEN HAVOC match. Simmons says Dusty Rhodes will be his manager; Kazmaier d. Cactus when Abby runs in w. kendo stick but Sting grabs stick away & pounds Abby & Cactus. DRAW-PLUS.

[MAIN EVENT]: Pillman d. Taylor; Sting d. Fever; Luger d. Terry Bronson; (HHCC) Same as others; (DANGER ZONE) Paul E. w. Rick Steiner; (HANDICAP) Enforcers d. Steiner by DQ when Freebirds run-in. Enforcers double DDT Jimmy Garvin; Other winner: Cactus Jack. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(USWA/WMC) - [RECAP] Eric Embry-Eddie Marlin saga; (SEG) Marlin says he'll beat Embry in 6-man tag or get

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale rating.

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on his knees & say Embry's a better man; Embry/Tom Prichard d. Freezer Thompson/Dave Dowdy; (ANGLE) Freezer rejects Embry's bid to join his group; (REPLAY) Jerry Lawler-Billy Joe Travis saga; Jeff Jarrett/Robert Fuller d. Doug Masters/Scorpion 2 straight falls. BOMB-PLUS....only 2 matches in 90 min. Very bad show.

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Bushwhackers d. Pete Weeks/Bruce Mitchell; (SPEC RPT) Hogan-Undertaker & Sid Justice team on SURVIVOR SERIES; Ted DiBiase d. Chris Hawn; Neidhart d. Nick Tarantino; (FEATURE) Sgt. Slaughter at war memorial (also on SOW); Steamboat d. Brian Costello; (BARBER SHOP) Brutus Beefcake w. Natural Disasters; Mountie d. Blaze; Roddy Piper d. Bob Smedley; Other winner: I.R. Schyster. RESTHOLD. [SUPERSTARS]: Jake Roberts d. Pierce; Justice vs. El Diablo becomes Sid vs. Undertaker when Diablo agrees to leave. As Sid chokes Taker, El returns, unmaskes as Jake. Sid locked in ropes & Jake goes after him w. king cobra until Jim Duggan saves; (UPDATE) Hogan-Undertaker at SURVIVOR; Kerry Von Erich d. Brawler; (CLIP) "SC;" (VIDEO) Tito Santana in bullring; (HANDICAP) Disasters d. Dwayne Gill/Barry Hardy/Jim Arnon; Ric Flair d. Ron Cumberland; (FUNERAL PARLOR) Percy w. Duggan; Other winners: Rockers. DRAW.

(LPWA) - [LPWA TITLE] Reggie Bennett d. Lady X by DQ. X retains belt; Queen's Court d. Bad, Black & Beautiful by DQ; Terri Power d. Heidi Lee Morgan by DQ. NO RATING....repeat telecast.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Steven DeTruth/Scott Anthony/Scott Hudson, PW '91: (SH) "Big Jim Bryant weighs in at 320." (SD) "320? Isn't that your IQ, Scotty?" (SA) "Yes, that is factual. Everything is satisfactual. (Sings) Zip-a-dee-doo-dah, zip-a-dee-ay. My, oh my, what a wonderful day." (SD) (sings) "Plenty of sunshine headin' my way." (SH) (speaks) "It's a small world after all and I wish you two would jump off it." 2. Hudson/DeTruth/Anthony, PW '91: (SH) "And there's a warning from the referee." (SD) "Warning! Warning! Will Robinson!" (SA) "Hey, that's LOST IN SPACE, isn't it?" (SD) "Yep, and speaking of LOST IN SPACE, let's go back to Scott Hudson." 3. Jim Cornette, WRESTLING TALK: "The only person who never liked anything we did was Jim Herd. We always knew when we were on to something because anything he didn't like, we knew was going to catch on with the public." 4. Cornette, WT, on Mulkeys: "There's always a threat that one day, like fungus on a shower curtain, they may return." 5. DeTruth, PW '91, on Beautiful Barbie: "That Barbie! Give her an inch and she'll make an outfit out of it." 6. Larry Zbyszko, WCW PRO, on Freebirds: "You two birds just made the endangered species list." 7. Jerry Lawler, WMC, on Billy Joe Travis: "He had a string hanging off his shoulder. Then I realized it was his arm." 8. Craig Johnson, MLW, on Soultaker's home: "Did he say Dungeon NV? That may be a part of Las Vegas we don't know about." 9. Hudson, MLW, on Soultaker: "This guy has tattoos on him like the Mona Lisa. He may have The Lord's Supper on somewhere." 10. Michael St. John, WMC, on odds of Scorpion/Masters beating Jarrett/Fuller: "That would be like Middle Tennessee State beating Florida State in football."

11. Anthony, PW '91: "It's the Stinger Splash from Big Jim Bryant. Nobody does it better!" 12. Diamond Dallas Page, WCW PRO, on Windham/Rhodes lariats: "Roy Rogers had nothing on that." 13. Cornette, WT, on Verne Langdon: "I've never met him but I've seen his pictures. What a head of hair. It's great. What is he? 81 or 82? Was he the guy that got the original patent on Rogain?" 14. Roddy Piper, SOW, on Natural Disasters' opponents: "...dropping like flies around a No-Pest Strip." 15. Vince McMahon, SOW, on Flair: "There he is...in all his realness." 16. Bobby Heenan, WC, on Brian Costello: "I used to know his partner, Bud Abbott."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Steve Planamenta, LARRY KATZ SHOW, on caller asking what he would change about the WWF: "I wouldn't begin to tell Mr. McMahon how to run his business." 2. Cornette, WT: "I think a wrestler of The Ultimate Warrior's calibre can put the final nail in the (WWF's) competition." 3. McMahon, SOW: "No one...I mean NO ONE applies a hold in the history of wrestling like Ric Flair." 4. Jim Ross, PH: "I've been accused of talking too much about football---so that's the extent of it for this hour." 5. Lawler, WMC, on Travis: "He ought to be arrested for impersonating a professional wrestler."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Hudson, MLW, on Soultaker: "Do you know how tough it is to get that many tattoos?" 2. DeTruth, PW '91, on Chic Donovan: "Not to say the Chickster is too old but is that his walker that's standing in the foyer?" 3. Joe Pedicino, MLW, on Savage decision: "Is it not right for a man to get in the ring and defend his wife?" 4. Jim Neidhart, SOW: "Why do I get all the weird opponents? Is there something wrong with me? Am I crazy?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. RIDICULOUS DORK (Anthony on Blazer R.D. Swain's initials). 2. THE HUMAN ORCHID (Tony Schiavone on Johnny B. Badd). 3. MR. GOMEZ ADAMS (Duggan on Percy).

BEST PICTURES - 1. WCW PRO, Taylor/Pillman nose-to-nose. 2. PTW, Sean Mooney hauled out on stretcher. 3. WCW, Madusa Miceli snatching knuckles out of Jeannie Clarke's skirt. 4. SOW, Sid/Undertaker nose-to-nose. 5. SOW, Jake going after Sid w. king cobra. 6. SOW, Piper facing away from ring during Flair match.

ENGLISH LESSON - Lawler, WMC, on Travis: "He DON'T have anything in his life that means a thing."

TERRIBLE TASTE AWARD - Herb Abrams, UWF, after tossing water on Mr. Red: "I wish this was a cup of urine instead of water."

VIVID IMAGINATION AWARD - Abrams, UWF: "Tune in next week for an interview on the debut of the diabolical Kevin Sullivan in the UWF."

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - Brutus Beefcake, WC: "...the bigger they are, the harder they fall."

BLOOPER AWARD - Magnum T.A., WWW: "Big Josh is one-SIXTH of the world tag team champions." With three men on a team, isn't he one-THIRD?

BOO AWARDS - 1. Page, WCW PRO, for the usual. 2. USWA/WMC, for only 2 matches in 90 minutes. 3. Abrams, UWF, for bad taste comment.

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MATWATCHING

THE OTHER SIDE: John Arezzi made a valiant attempt to get opposing views to Eddie Gilbert's comments from the previous week on PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT but could not get through to Jack Petrik, Jim Herd was on vacation and he was unsuccessful in reaching Jerry Lawler.

BUDDY SPEAKS: Arezzi had Buddy Rogers on his first hour Sunday and Rogers squashed stories Herb Abrams is telling about Rogers appearing for WWF. As of Sunday, Rogers had allegedly never met or spoken to Abrams.

DOCTOR D'S DILEMMA: Abrams has been tossing about \$100,000 offers to anyone who can beat Steve Williams in the ring. Reportedly, David Schultz is interested but wants to make sure the check is good first.

NO MORE COLOR: Deja vu of Ole Anderson. WCW is dropping color commentators in favor of solo hosts with periodic mike guests. Dallas Page goes back on the road as a manager, Paul E. Dangerously's suspension cancels out two shows and Missy Hyatt only does three on-cam shots on MAIN EVENT. We presume this includes Magnum T.A. as well.

PREDICTION: They'll reverse that decision in a few weeks or months. There is no way one person can call the number of matches Jim Ross is required to weekly without fatigue, unless there's a sidekick. Ratings will likely suffer without colorful exchanges. And as was proven in the summer of '90, bicycling in and out guests is the quickest way to inconsistency.

DISABLED LIST: At least five people go into Sunday night's HALLOWEEN HAVOC banged up. Ron Simmons was skedded to be held out all week with a wrist injury from Greensboro. Brian Pillman (shoulder), Scott Hall (knee) and El Gigante (foot) are all hobbling and Scott Steiner probably should not even work the show.

CANCELING OUT: Joe Pedicino scratched Sunday's Global date in Marietta. He made the call after the Braves last two NLCS games topped a 50 rating and 70 share on WAGA in Atlanta. "We wouldn't have drawn 100 people," said Pedicino. Joe tries again Nov. 18.

INSIDE OUT: The scheduled piece on Dr. George T. Zahorian II was scrapped from Friday's syndicated INSIDE EDITION. No word on rescheduling.

GRAHAM'S DATES: Superstar Billy Graham has a new tentative date of Nov. 15 for Roy Firestone's UP CLOSE on ESPN but don't place any bets on it.

NETWORKING: WCW WORLD WIDE has been moved from Sundays at 10 a.m. to 1 a.m. Monday morning on WGBO/Chicago. WFLD, the Chicago Fox affil, has dumped WWF CHALLENGE from 11 a.m. Sundays to 3 a.m. Sundays.

MORE NETWORKING: Lots of time shifting in Dallas. Global MAJOR LEAGUE moves to 9 p.m. and there's talk of switching times for WCW syndie shows. None of them have even drawn a 1 rating in the market in the last four weeks. Yet, LPWA repeats drew a 3 last week.

THE "NEW" CARTEL: With Rip Rogers and Cactus Jack out of GWF, Pedicino revamps The Cartel with Scott Anthony/One Man Gang/Makham Singh and a player to be

named later.

MAX, THE BOSS: Global shot an angle Friday which tabs syndicator Max Andrews as The Boss but Marco Villa reads a statement which bans Max from appearing at ringside. So another Boss is to come.

TITAN TALES: If Sid Justice did not return Monday night at TV, predictions were for Randy Savage to be reinstated. Weekend crowds were confused why Randy subbed for Sid when, on TV, he is still suspended.

OFFICIAL LINE: Titan personnel were saying Kerry Von Erich missed the weekend to attend a funeral of one of the 17 victims of the Kileen TX massacre.

THE \$100,000 PYRAMID?: Titan brings the debut mat show Dec. 6 to The Great American Pyramid, the new 25,000-seat Memphis arena. Justice-Jake Roberts is listed on top but it'll be Savage-Roberts if Sid is still on the DL. Undertaker-Jim Duggan and I.R. Schyster-Big Bossman are also skedded.

STRIKE MOVEMENT: More union talks are set this week on the strike of EMLL LUCHA LIBRE in Mexico City. Friday, Arena Mexico only drew 8,800 (down from a regular 16,000) and reports are no cameras were present, forcing another recap show Sunday on Galavision.

THE OFFER: Henry Raines is offering the four September SUNCOAST PRO shows on video for \$19.95. Featured is the Penelope Paradise/Superstar vs. Frankie Reyes/Boris Malenko feud. By the way, Henry, I've lost your phone number. Leave it on my machine, if you please. Order the video from: SUNCOAST PRO WRESTLING, 5748 14 ST. WEST, BRADENTON FL 34207.

FINAL NOTE: I was quizzed about Jim Herd's status on PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT Sunday but contrary to many wishes, there's no public evidence Herd's in jeopardy.

WCW SQUEAKS OVER PTW

RATINGS RAP

Led by an Enforcers-Screaming Eagles tag match, WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING edged WWF PRIME TIME to win the Nielsen cable ratings race for the week ending Oct. 13.

WCW scored a 2.6 rating and 5.4 per cent share of audience to win the ratings battle for the third time in four weeks. Still battling tough MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL and CBS sitcom competition, PTW did rally for a 2.5/3.6, boosted by a Randy Savage guest shot.

Otherwise, it was a dismal week. ALL-AMERICAN fell to its second-lowest mark ever with a 1.9/4.7 (the Clarence Thomas hearings hurt as much as the NFL). WCW MAIN EVENT dropped 10% to a 1.8/3.2 and POWER HOUR skidded from its record Saturday to a 1.7/6.7.

CABLE

Week Ending Oct. 14	Rating/Share	Total Homes	Year Ago
WCW WORLD CHAMP. (TBS 10/12)	2.6/5.4	1.48 million	2.8/6.5
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 10/14)	2.5/3.6	1.43 million	2.6/3.8
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 10/13)	1.9/4.7	1.09 million	2.5/6.2
WCW MAIN EVENT (TBS 10/13)	1.8/3.2	1.03 million	2.1/4.2
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 10/12)	1.7/6.7	971,000	2.1/3.8

50 Years of Mat Television, Part IV

1955-75: THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL YEARS

The year 1955 intertwined pro wrestling with an onrushing genre of television which captivated America: the big-money quiz show. As the mat game departed prime-time network TV in 1955, THE \$64,000 QUESTION was ushering in an era where isolation booths replaced rings; yet, the program forms were married in many facets of the public eye.

In his book TELEVISION AND SOCIETY, Harry Skornia writes how by the mid-1950s, certain groups had begun to protest the continued televising of wrestling:

"It was becoming obvious to even the most naive that wrestling matches were either rigged or staged. That they were listed as 'sports' instead of drama would in itself represent a type of rigging."

By 1957, with more than forty big-money giveaways in prime time, journalists and Congress began suspecting a subtle connection between wrestling and quiz shows. From THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER: "The \$64,000 question on television now is whether the quiz shows are real contests or an intellectual grunt-and-groan equivalent of wrestling."

The next year, producers of the CBS and NBC quiz DOTTO confessed to feeding answers to charismatic contestants. Rep. Oren Harris began investigating the burgeoning scandal and linked it to wrestling: "We do not feel that the quiz programs under consideration are 'mere entertainment.' Everyone knows that dramatic productions are carefully rehearsed. The same can be said of professional wrestling matches which are required by law in some jurisdictions to be designated 'exhibitions' and not as 'contests' or 'matches.'"

While some national magazines, such as TIME and LOOK proclaimed the death of pro wrestling after its demise from network TV, a new hybrid---the local studio show---began to unfold. Sociologist Greg Stone states promoters knew they needed TV to build gates for their arena shows and likewise had to run small-town live cards to keep television interest high. Dr. Gerald Morton, in his WRESTLING TO RASSLIN, writes: "Wrestling had become 'a parasite' to television."

Under the loosely-aligned banner of the National Wrestling Alliance, mid-1950s promoters staked out re-

Wrestling promoters also learned a shrewd lesson from television which boxing people overlooked. In order to keep weekly network slots, boxing match-makers increasingly turned to championship matchups to keep ratings high. Eventually, local small-town boxing cards were killed. Former wrestling commentator-turned-news anchor Bob Howell says, "You never put your best matches on television. In those days, what money you made was at the gate and you couldn't give it away on the air."

Among the top early local mat shows were offerings in Atlanta, Houston, St. Louis, New York and Tampa. Ed Capral's popular LIVE ATLANTA WRESTLING was de-tailed in the 1990 MATWATCH ANNUAL.

The late Paul Boesch promoted and hosted the fledgling mat show in Houston. "Wrestling was the first telecast of sports in Houston", Boesch told author Geoff Winningham. "It was the first remote telecast in Houston." KLEE telecast the show and at one point in the mid-1970s, the Houston show was considered the longest running local program in the U.S.

A cult following still exists for LIVE FROM SUNNYSIDE GARDEN, broadcast live every Tuesday night from Queens, N.Y. A 1958 TV GUIDE listing indicates a midget match and tag team clash topped the card. Tom Thumb took on Tiny Tim and in the tag battle, Iron Mike DiBiase and Bulldog Danny Pleches faced Gene Kelly and Duke Keomuka. SUNNYSIDE retained respectable enough ratings opposite THE GARRY MOORE SHOW to stay on WPIX until Yankee baseball eventually bumped it.

St. Louis fans were taken to the Chase Auditorium for an NWA-based show, produced by Sam Muchnick. Virtually every top NWA performer had to pass a litmus test with crowds on WRESTLING FROM THE CHASE. The St. Louis show was one of the country's first to exceed an hour weekly.

(In Part 5, the Florida story.)

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